



Commonwealth of Virginia

Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam

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Governor Northam Announces App That Makes Small, Women-Owned, and Minority- Owned Businesses More Accessible

~ Start Small app has a searchable database of more than 100,000 companies ~

RICHMOND—Governor Ralph Northam today announced the launch of the Start Small app to connect app users and state government agencies with nearby vendors. [Start Small](#) is free, mobile-friendly, and can be used by anyone.

Keyword searches will match users with nearby businesses from the approximately 100,000 registered vendors. Searches can be further refined to only small businesses, including those owned by women, minorities (SWaM) or service-disabled veterans certified through the Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity.

“Virginia is stronger because of our small businesses,” **said Governor Northam**. “This app makes it easier than ever to support our local, women-owned, and minority-owned businesses. I encourage all Virginians to take advantage of Start Small to find vendors that fit their needs.”

Start Small helps agencies with the routine purchases that keep government running and make up millions in dollars of government spending. Governor Northam issued [Executive Order 35](#) in 2019 directing executive branch agencies and institutions to allocate more than 42 percent of discretionary spending to certified small businesses.

Agency purchases are often made using small purchase charge cards. More than \$945 million was spent by cardholders in fiscal year 2020.

“The Virginia Department of Transportation remains a leader in SWaM and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise best practices, and I am proud that its procurement application can be expanded to help state agencies connect with and support small businesses across the Commonwealth,” **said Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine**. “Economic growth and vitality will depend upon access to the best, the brightest, and most innovative small businesses in Virginia.”

“The collaboration and resourcefulness of the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Department of General Services exemplifies the great successes we can achieve as a Commonwealth when we cultivate cross-agency partnerships,” **said Secretary of Administration Grindly Johnson**. “The resource that the Department of General Services and the Virginia Department of Transportation created will, in turn, expand the relationships between state government agencies and small businesses in Virginia.”

Dozens of businesses register in [eVA](#) each day. Registering is free and helps businesses – particularly small businesses – get noticed by government purchasers. There are nearly 13,000 small, women-owned, and minority-owned certified vendors registered in eVA. More than 191,000 purchase orders, worth more than \$1.5 billion, were issued through eVA to small, women-owned and minority-owned businesses in fiscal year 2020.

The Virginia Department of Transportation created the Start Small app using vendor data from the Department of General Services’ electronic procurement system, known as eVA. Companies register to do business with the Commonwealth through this system. The new app will allow state agencies, who frequently look for companies to work with, to access this convenient and searchable list of registered companies.

“With the Virginia Department of Transportation constructing and maintaining over 57,000 miles of roadway across the Commonwealth, in addition to the equipment and tools necessary to keep Virginia moving, our agency does business with vendors and suppliers across the state,” **said the Virginia Department of Transportation Commissioner Stephen C. Brich**. “We are proud to contribute to the growth and success of Virginia entrepreneurs and the economy by supporting small businesses owned by women, minorities and disabled veterans.”

“We are excited to collaborate with the Virginia Department of Transportation to make it easier and more convenient for state employees to find eVA registered vendors all across the Commonwealth,” **Department of General Services Director Joe Damico said.** “We understand that when employees are in the field and they need immediate supplies, they just need to get the job done. Bringing this information to their fingertips helps ensure those taxpayer dollars are spent with Virginia’s small businesses to the greatest extent possible.”

To learn more, visit viriniadot.org and eva.virginia.gov.

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